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Re: General Situation in the Ukraine

End 1964, Early 1965

Source: Mrs Martyniuk, formerly of Lutsk, Volynska Oblast, Ukraine

Date: 15 April, 1965

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE SMETHOOSE EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

1. Source, 64 yrs of age and a widow for the past two yrs, arrived to the United States by plane from Moscow through Paris, and landed in New York City on March 27, 1965. She came for good to her son, Evhen Martyniuk M.D., who resides at 92 Northwest Ave., Tallmadge, Ohio.

Source lived permanently in her hometown Lutsk, and on few occasions in recent years visited Kiev, Lviv, Chernyhiw, and few other smaller cities in the Ukraine. She is Ukrainian, Orthodox, graduate of secondary school. Before her retirement she worked at the museum in Lutsk as junior clerk. Her husband worked in the administration in Lutsk as low grade clerk. Before the war they owned a grocery store.

Source seems to be a serious lady, without much of exaggeration or dramatization, of average intelligence, and quite a good memory as for her age. She was never a member of the Party, never imprisoned, and did not spend any time in the labor corrective camps.

On the plane from Moscow there were about 105 persons, among them a famous Soviet chess player. From Paris to the U.S. there was only one Russian who was going to Washington, D.C. on some trade business.

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It took Source two yrs before she received the permission to emigrate to the U.S. Before leaving the USSR she was not given any instructions how to behave in the U.S., and did not have to sign any obligations or commitments neither in Moscow nor Lutsck. She was only instructed not to take out any Soviet currency(she managed, however, to bring a few paper bills and some coins), gold and valuables(with the exception of limited personal jewelry), nor any letters.

Before departure from Moscow airport the Soviet customs control was very superficial. Source thinks this was because she is an elderly person. She could have taken along, in her opinion, more things and especially those that were not permitted.

At the New York airport the customs control was also very superficial. Only two oranges(Russian) were confiscated, but she still managed to bring a few, and some candies ~~xx~~ and chocolate too.

2. Source was interviewed in her present home, at the address mentioned above, on April 6 and 7, 1965.

1. POPULATION

City population in the western oblasts' of the Ukraine comprises about 70% of newcomers, esp. Russians, also local Ukrainians from the countryside and the Ukrainians from the eastern Ukraine. The population has greatly increased since 1945, and is continuing so in the present. As an example, Lutsk had 35,000 people at the end of the WWII, now it has 80,000.

The original population in most cities decreased greatly -- to some extent because of the arrests, but mostly because of the recruitment for work on the virgin lands, and better working opportunities for professional and semi-professional people, especially young, outside their locality and the Ukraine as well. The arrests were esp. numerous right after the WWII, and they were directed towards the nationally conscious Ukrainians which were active or had some connections with the underground movement, or had some higher administrative positions during the German occupation.

In general, the people can move about freely throughout the entire Soviet Union, provided they can afford it.

The relationship between the Ukrainians and the Russians in the Ukraine is harmonious and the difference between them as such does not exist. The distinction is made apparent, however, when there is a question pertaining to an individual's qualities (is he or she good or bad).

2. RUSSIFICATION

The Russification in the Ukraine is constantly going on. In all large cities, esp. Lviv and Kiev, the people talk only in Russian -- in offices, on the street, in the store, and at the Universities and Institutes.

In Kiev, as in all cities of the eastern Ukraine, many people are very Russified, particularly in large cities. In many

cases they even do not admit their Ukrainian descent. The Russian language became well-rooted ~~far~~ there for a long time and some people generally feel that "it's all the same", while others use it out of habit.

Some people in the Transcarpathia are ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ nationally not too conscious either. They call themselves "Rusyny" and use broken Ukrainian language.

In Lviv Russian language seems to prevail because overwhelming majority of the population is Russian.

At the Ukrainian Universities and Institutes the students protest ^{against} the usage of Russian language but do not rebel against it, in the full sense ~~of~~ of the word. Their remarks ^{and assertions} that if one does not know any Ukrainian one should not come to study at the Ukrainian University, have little effect.

In the country the situation is ~~xxxxxxxx~~ different. There, almost always and everywhere one can hear the Ukrainian language. There are also many small villages, far distant from larger cities, where the people do not know Russian at all. This is not an exception even in the eastern Ukraine.

In general, the most nationally conscious people, both older and young, are those of western oblasts, including Volynska, Rovenska, Lvivska, Ivano-Frankivska, and Tarnopilska.

3. PARTY and ADMINISTRATION

On all the important party and administrative positions in the Ukraine there are mostly Russians, but a few Ukrainians too.

Most of the people are trying to be accepted to the party because without it is impossible to get a better job. The Ukrainians in the party are mostly those who went through the ranks of the Komsomol. There is an advantage to have a few Ukrainians in the party or on some higher administra-

tive positions for it is the only way to get some information beforehand as to who might be arrested, what to expect, etc.

In the villages and small towns the majority of administrative positions are occupied by the Ukrainians, party members of course. In the larger cities the situation is quite different, with the Russians leading the field.

The party members do not have any special privileges, with the exception of getting better ^{Sometimes} jobs. One can see in the line in the front of a store a chief of the obkom and a general, alongside ordinary worker (despite the fact that higher official and military personnel have their special stores).

In Lutsk, on the administrative and the party positions there are Russians and Ukrainians as well, exceptions are, however, the key positions, held mostly by the Russians.

The source knows personally Yuknym Yaroshchuk, ^{local Ukrainian,} chairman of ~~the~~ Volyn Oblast Soviet of Workers, who recently visited the United States. He is a nice person and nothing could be held against him. Before Yaroshchuk's departure, a few girls from the museum came over to the source (she had some connection with the museum) and asked her for some nice embroidery which he could take along to distribute as gifts. The source did not have anything to offer and suggested that the girls find such things in Lviv, where the selections are more varied and readily available.

Her acquaintances suggested that she should go to see him in case he had a chance to meet her son, but she decided against it. After his return, she was busy preparing for her departure and did not have time to see him.

4. MILITIA, K G B, ARRESTS

At the present, there seem to be no hostilities between the militia and the KGB, as it had been earlier. There are Ukrainians in both, the militia and the KGB, only they are not as

numerous in the KGB as in the militia.

The political arrests almost do not exist at the present. The only numerous arrests are those for the speculation on the black market.

The political prisoners who were released from prisons and slave labour camps did not settle in their former localities because they had difficulties getting registered there and find a job. They usually settled far from their native places or simply remained in the vicinity of the camps in which they were interned.

- ✓ The chief of the KGB in Lutsk was till last year col. Izotov. He was born 1920 in the Vladimirskaya Oblast. He is Russian and his wife Ukrainian from Lutsk. He came to Lutsk shortly after the end of the WWII, after the completion of his military service. He was a very nice person and his attitude towards the local population was good. He always used to begin his day by listening to the programs on the Radio Liberty (the source knew his family well, mainly through his wife). Last year he transferred, of his own wish, to Cherkassy for reasons of health (his only child-daughter required different climate and the family moved to Cherkassy).

5. POST STALIN PERIOD

During the Khrushchev rule the life changed considerably. There was more freedom of speech and less of political arrests. The occasional political arrests usually went under different pretext, like speculation, misdemeanour, etc. Under Stalin there was no freedom at all -- a husband was afraid to talk even to his wife. Under Khrushchev no one was afraid to talk even to strangers. One could hear in a streetcar or in some other public place people ~~xxxxxxx~~ criticising aloud Khrushchev, his policies, and his behaviour (i.e. desk thumping with his shoe).

6. YOUTH

Though many a youth in the cities of the Ukraine are speaking Russian, all of them are more nationally conscious than ever before, both in East and West Ukraine. In Source words: if in 1918 the national consciousness had been as it is today, the Ukraine's independence would have been more lasting. The young people are very much interested in everything that is foreign. If they see a foreigner, they carefully observe his style of clothing, manners, etc., and immediately imitate it all. They like to dress nicely and fashionably too.

The youth is crazy about jazz and devotes a lot of time listening to the records or frequenting restaurants where it is being played. In most of these places even the sedate bands swing into jazz towards the close of the evening.

The most craze among the youth at present is cars and everyone is saving as much money as he can in order to buy one. Some of them buy old cars and repair them, while others buy parts, one at the time according to their financial means, and assemble them themselves. The possession of cars makes the young people feel very happy and proud.

The owners of cars, however, do not use them frequently and do not drive very far -- the repaired or assembled cars will not last on long trips, the gasoline is expensive, no parking on city streets is allowed. In the winter time there are other problems too -- the roads are not suitable for driving, there is a shortage of snow chains and antifreeze. Therefore one can see practically all the city lots full of cars covered with snow, including those of high party or administrative officials.

The adults are interested in cars as much as the young ones.

7. KOMSOMOL

Virtually every young person belongs to the Komsomol. In Lutsk, in 1962, out of 80 students in one of the graduating classes only 3 were not members of the Komsomol.

The reason for such a great number of members is the fact

that everyone belongs there and no one looks down upon it. The members have some special privileges in the form of various clubs, separate and better cafeterias, etc.

The majority of the youth do not take the Komsomol seriously and with conviction.

8. SCHOOLS

In the Ukraine there are Ukrainian and Russian schools as well. Anyone can attend either of them as they desire. The Jews, although they are one of the minority groups, send their children exclusively to the Russian schools.

In Lutsk there are 18 Ukrainian elementary schools and only 2 Russian.

The director of the Pedagogical Institute in Lutsk is an Ukrainian. The instructor of physics in this Institute is Zenoviy Volodymyrovych Pankevych. He came from Lviv, is 35 yrs of age, married for 4 yrs, has one daughter 2 yrs old. He is of a good character, nationally conscious, and very helpful to the students.

In all the Ukrainian schools the classes are conducted in the Ukrainian language, and Russian is taught only as a subject. The exception are the Universities and other higher educational institutions where the majority of the students are foreigners, esp. Russians. This particularly is evident in Lviv. In such cases those foreign students complain that they do not understand the Ukrainian language, and with their majority they outvote the minority of the Ukrainian students as to the choice of Russian language of instruction.

In order to get accepted to a university or an institute one has to take a competitive entrance examination, which is always quite difficult. The prospective students can take the examination to any school they desire and no one

tells them where they should or must apply. But the students frequently apply to the schools outside their locality or even outside the Ukraine knowing that they have better chances there. The bribery in the schools, as in any other field, is widespread to a great extent and it results from a low standard of living.

In the country the majority of girls do not go beyond the 7th grade because they have very few chances for higher education. Boys, however, strive to finish at least the secondary school. The limited opportunities for higher education for the country youth result from demand for farm labor on kolhosps.

9. CHURCH

The source does not know anything about the arrests of the former Ukrainian Catholic priests and nuns in 1963 in Lviv, and about other matters connected with the Ukrainian Catholic Church because she is Orthodox.

There were two Orthodox Theological Seminaries in the Ukraine -- one in Lutsk and the other in Odessa, with the 3 yr period of study in both of them. Last yr the Lutsk Seminary was transferred and combined with the Odessa Seminary, so now there is only one seminary in the Ukraine.

In the Ukraine the churches are frequented only by the older people because it is not "convenient" for the young ones. The young people, however, are only too eager to go to the church but there are too many obstacles, esp. from the Komsomol. Quite a number of young people, including members of the Komsomol and members of the party, frequent the churches on the outskirts of cities ~~xx~~ and esp. if they are for any reason in another city, where no one knows who they are.

The church weddings are not very frequent because the young people avoid it for the same reason as the church attendance.

The christenings of the children were, till not long ago, quite frequent because the people could invite a priest to their homes and do it in secret. But since the time when all the priests started to receive government pay, they are forbidden to go to the people's homes in order to perform any kind of service. Therefore now most of the parents christen their children by water themselves.

There also occurred some changes in the funeral ceremonies. The priests now can not take part in the funeral processions and ^{only} can meet the coffin at the entrance to the cemetery. The funeral processions through the city are not permitted now anyway, and it is motivated that they are menace to the street traffic. In order to prevent it, there are now special automobiles for this purpose that carry the coffins to the cemetery. Actually these are just ordinary hooded trucks -- the coffin is placed inside and there ~~xx~~ are benches on both sides for the family to sit down. The friends usually rent a bus for themselves, but at times the family can obtain a truck from the place of employment ^{of the} deceased, if such are available there and depending, of course, on the position held there by the deceased. On the cemetery everything is already as formerly -- the priest, the choir, and all the church customs.

✓ In Lutsk, 4 yrs ^{in the spring} ago, the Oblast Committee for Church Affairs, whose head is Kalytov (he is Ukrainian and his name used to be Kalyta), closed the church on a Friday. On the Saturday (8 days later) a great number of people gathered for the services. Most of the people were from the vicinity of Lutsk because all churches were closed there long ago (in general, there are very few churches outside larger cities). The church in Lutsk has always attracted many people from afar because the church itself was very beautiful, there was a very good choir singing during the services, and everything was conducted there in accordance with the church right ^{Le}. When the gathered people saw that the church was closed, they all

marched to the Obkom building, broke all ~~the~~ of the windows and generally created disturbance. As a result of it, the church was ~~immediately~~ opened immediately and remains opened till today.

10. NEWSPAPERS and RADIO

The newspapers are all alike throughout the entire Ukraine. Every day there is a 2 hr program on the radio from Kiev for the newspapers and the rayon and local papers reprint the broadcast materials. The same articles and by the same writers are found in the newspapers of Kiev and small village as well. The only difference between one and another are the local news items, of which none is interesting ~~at~~ to the people. In general, the people do not read newspapers very much because they are not objective and also one can not find out anything from them.

Instead, all the people, from ordinary workers to high party and administrative officials, listen to the programs broadcasted over the Radio Liberty. The programs are broadcasted on almost all languages of the Soviet Union, and they are repeated several times a day, so everyone has a chance and at different hrs of the day to catch up with the program. This program is the only ^{more or less} means of objective information for the people and the only way for them to find out what is going on in the world.

The jamming of the programs broadcasted over the Radio Liberty, for the past two yes, has been somewhat weaker and not so frequent. But even before it was possible to pick up the programs on a good receiver and at certain time of the day.

11. CENSORSHIP

There is a censorship in the Ukraine and even quite strict. All the letters which are coming from outside the Soviet Union or those that are going out are carefully censored. The wife of one engineer was telling the source that there

are large drums into which the letters are placed. These drums revolve rapidly and out of them come opened letters ready for inspection.

12. KOLHOSES

The work in the kolhosps is very hard because there is a great shortage of labor force. Every young men who finished his military service does not want to return to the village but is trying somehow to get registered in the city. The only ones that are returning are those that have ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ wives and children in the villages.

This shortage of labor places a greater burden on women who have to work very hard in order to make up for the deficiency. Each woman is responsible for the cultivation and has to care for 1.06 acre of land during the entire year.

13. VIRGIN LANDS

The recruitment for work on the virgin lands is based on much propaganda -- the people are promised good living & working conditions, spacious quarters, etc. The people who go there are always disillusioned because none of the promised things are there. To return is almost impossible -- there is nothing to return to, because they have lost there everything they had before, esp. the place to live. In the Ukraine empty quarters are quickly taken by someone else because of a great shortage of living space.

14. FOOD

The eastern Ukraine is quite poor in the country as well as in the cities. Especially Cherkaska Oblast, through which the source traveled across, is in a horrible state. From the bus window one could see a very poor and very old mud-and-straw huts, halfway sunken into the ground. Near those huts there was no sign of stables, which means that the people have no milk or meat of their own, nor there was any evidence of household plots.

In the western Ukraine the food situation is ~~xx~~ much better in the countryside. There is more opportunity, although with some limitations, to keep a cow for milk or a pig for meat, and to have a small household plots for vegetable growing. In fact, every piece of land in the country as well as in the city is utilized for that purpose.

The food situation is better in the country than in the cities because there is opportunity to steal. The greatest shortage of food all over the country is that of flour, sugar, and edible fats.

After Khrushchev's removal the food situation has improved considerably. Since that time the flour was rationed twice -- the first time 3klg. per person and second time 2klg. Milk and sugar is also available now and the sale is limited to 2ltr. of milk and 1klg. of sugar per person~~xx~~ at a time and one can return again for more if the store still has it. The lines, nowever, at the stores are very long and time consuming.

The shortage of food has widespread the activities ~~fx~~ of black market. The country people are bringing into the cities everything they can and are selling it for higher prices -- e.g. 1klg. of flour on the black market was 1 ruble as compared with 41 kopeks of government regulated price.

15. ECONOMIC PLANNING

The people do not explain the shortage of food as being caused by drought or by any other means, like poor harvest, etc. The drought is nothing new, it occurred often during the time of Tsarist Russia, and poor harvests are periodical occurrences. Therefore the shortage is explained as bad economic planning of the government. ~~XH~~ According to Khrushchev's planning, the type of crops which were needed most were not cultivated in the areas which were best suited for this purpose. Instead, it was constantly experimenting with some new crops and growing them in the areas best suited for some well established crops

and vice versa. This kind of experimentations always ended, so far, in a failure. Then everything was being changed into ~~xx~~ the former pattern, loosing a lot of time and a lot of crops too.

Another failure of the planning was the fact that for propagandistic purposes the government was sending a great quantity of food to different countries, not keeping any reserves for themselves in case of drought or poor harvest.

^{kind of} This experimentation was very frequent during the Khrushchev's reign and the shortage of food caused by the failure of his planning widespread a lot of discontent among the people. ~~XXXX~~
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ However, there were no unrests among the people because the regime is too strong and therefore there is very little chance for the people to succeed.

16. HEALTH SITUATION

The most widespread ~~XX~~ illnesses in the Ukraine are cancer and heart diseases.

The medicine, which is available in the pharmacies, is obtainable and the prices are reasonable. However, there still is shortage of medicine for more serious illnesses.

17. STANDARD of LIVING

The standard of living in the Ukraine is poor. The wages are very low and the prices are very high -- e.g. a medical doctor earns 150 rubles a month while a decent woman's coat costs at least 300 rubles. This situation increases briberies and stealing of state's goods. Actually, in their opinion, the people do not steal, because according to the socialist ideology everything belongs to the people, so they take their own goods and anything they can put their hands on.

18. HOUSING

The housing situation, esp. in large cities, is very bad. Each person has assigned 8 sq. m. of space. This is only

in theory because in practice it does not work out that way -- when the child is born, the family is not allotted additional space or they do not move to a larger apartment because there is a long waiting list and besides they would have to pay quite a large key money.

For the single people, esp. those that came to the city from the country, the housing problem is still worse. This is evident to such an extent that many young men, in order to get married, set a requirement for the girls to have their own apartment.

Lately there are being built (actually put together from prefabricated cement walls) many new housing projects, but the waiting lists for the apartments in these projects are so long that it will take a long time in order to solve this problem.

During Khrushchev's time, there were being built housing projects with one kitchen for five families. This created many inconveniences and problems, esp. when every woman wanted to prepare a meal at the same time. There was a very unfortunate incident in one of such projects in Lviv three yrs ago -- a child of one of the women, that were busy with cooking, was playing with a ball. The ball unexpectedly fell on the stove and overturned a pot with boiling milk which spilled out on the head of another child. The mother of the second child, in a fit of rage, grabbed the first child ~~and~~ and threw it out the window from the 3rd floor.

At the present, after Khrushchev's removal, ~~the housing situation has slightly improved. Now the houses are being built with one kitchen for three families instead of five.~~

19. INDUSTRY

In LUTSK there is a lot of industry though Source was unable to tell details. She knows there is a large machine building factory, a large bus factory - a subsidiary of Lviv plant; electrical bulb and some electronical factory; and some smaller factories .

20. OFF-LIMITS AREAS

✓ Off-limits areas are quite numerous in the Ukraine. From hearsay Source knows that they are mainly concentrated in the northern part of Volhynia and Polissya, in Carpathian Mountains, and usually have something to do with missiles.

Some forests and marshes regions in Volhynia and Polissia are completely under off-limits restriction but the exact location of bases is unknown to populace.

The workers working there are usually brought from somewhere local people are unaware of, at night, in covered trucks, and accommodated at the premisses within the off limits area. They stay on the premisses for one month or so and then are transferred to another area. This happens usually after they have finished one of the jobs they are supposed to do.

As a rule same people are always ^{doing} same phase of ~~the~~ same work at various places.

They have no contact with local population.

Truck drivers who deliver anything to such area , drive only one part of the road explicitly designated for them.

At some points in woods they have to get off their trucks and go back without seeing other drivers who take over their trucks and drive them another part of the road towards the destination.

✓ Off-limits area itself is likewise divided into closed sections , so it is impossible for an unauthorized person to go freely from one section to another. The inside truck drivers do also change at the gates of each section.

A year or so ago there must have gone something wrong at some premisses in a restricted area "not far " from LUTSK and a specialist was brought from the city. He was brought there by a panel truck at night and had no idea whatsoever where he was going. The only thing he knew ^{was} that at a gate guarded by the military he was greeted by a lieutenant colonel who took him through a few gates equally guarded to his destination. When they entered a certain section, a colonel was awaiting him and after greetings and another identification told the specialist to follow him. When lieutenant colonel wanted to follow him too, the colonel turned around and "chased" the lieutenant colonel away reminding him that he had no business there.

21. In general the populace did not mind Khrushchev's removal. In his last days he was quite severely criticized for his experiments and unkept promises. There were, however, some people, mostly among sophisticated intelligentsia, who used to say that ~~"even"~~ ^{"in his stupidity"} Khrushchev has done a lot of good, in spite of everything else. "Navit' u svoiy hlupoti win zrobyv bahato dobroho, pomymo wsioho" or as the Russians put it "W svoey glupote on zdelal tozhe ochen mnogo kharoshevo"/.

There was some anxiety as to what the new leaders will bring, and the population was carefully watching the events ~~impatiently~~ waiting for further developments. In general they did not consider the situation as stabilized and were rather inclined to expect some new crises. This mood however slowly subsided but still, even prior to immediate departure of Source for the West, people were not sure ~~whether not~~ ^{whether not} one day they will wake up with Brezhnev having been removed or something alike.

Little was known about the new leaders, their background as personalities also, and there was no "image" of them in the population. In Mar 1965 Brezhnev and Kosygin were still "not communicating" with and to the people.

2.2. Soviet - Chinese Conflict

On the whole people are very happy about the conflict. They approve of the fact that Russia has lost her hegemony in the communist block and ^{that the conflict has} contributed so much to the loss of her prestige in the satellite countries.

Some people, mainly among intelligentsia, expect further "emancipation in satellite - countries and hope that this will help Ukrainians and others in their "emancipation towards the satellites" as well. There were also voices that, on the contrary, this might increase Moscow's drive to centralization inside the Soviet Union.

In spite of all that Chinese as a race are not liked by people in the Ukraine.

2.3. Hungarian Revolution

There was a great fear among higher echelons of administration and in the party during the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. People were also talking about high tension in the Kremlin. There were comments that the leaders were mere loudmouths and cowards when it comes to action but this appraisal of them changed after the Revolution.

The population was carefully following up the events and impatiently waited for further results. In their opinion Moscow would have failed if the revolution would have been joined at the same time by similar upheavals in other satellite-countries.

The Soviet government - among other things - used for the quelling of Hungarian Revolution also Ukrainian units knowing that those would let Hungarians have it (as a revenge for Carpatho-Ukraine of 1938) and this is what really happened.

The losses were very heavy on both sides and Russians suffered in some cases even more than Hungarians. Source heard from a Ukrainian of Luck who happened to be there at the time of pacification with his unit. In the battle he took place not only adults but also children were fighting valiantly and with everything they had including even flowerpots thrown on soldiers' heads from windows.

24. MISCELLANEOUS

a. Road Building

In road building one can find in Lutsk the same planning situation as in agriculture. After the road is built, the authorities recall that they forgot to put in the sewage system. They start digging once again. ~~xxf~~ After ~~ix~~ it is all finished the authorities recall again something else and the same story ~~repeats~~ repeats itself a few times.

b. Tourism

✓ A new hotel is now being built ~~inx~~ in Lutsk. This hotel will be finished luxuriously and with all modern conviniences. There are rumours that this hotel will be for the foreign tourists, which means that the city of Lutsk will soon be opened up.